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Sen. Kuipers receives education award from parent-teacher group

LANSING – The Michigan Parents, Teachers and Students Association has awarded Sen. Wayne Kuipers, R-Holland, with its 2005 President’s Award for his work in changing the state’s testing program for high-school students.

Kuipers led the effort in the Legislature to use a college entrance exam-based test in place of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program test given to 11th-graders. The award states Kuipers received the honor “for demonstrating outstanding leadership and advocacy while leading the change in the high school MEAP test on behalf of children and youth.”

“The change gives students and their parents a way to take the test seriously as well as something that can be used for college applications,” Kuipers said. “I’m honored my effort has been recognized by such an influential group.”

The governor signed the legislation that made the change in early January. The new test, called the Michigan Merit Exam, will be based on a test such as the ACT or SAT and will first be given in 2007.

The senator chairs the Senate Education Committee.

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A photo of Kuipers receiving the award is available on the senator’s Web page located at senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire/Kuipers/Kuipers.htm. The photo shows Kuipers, center, receiving the award from Barbara Blanchard, the organization’s president-elect, and Kevin McLogan, an education representative with the organization.